

FOUR

ALTERNATIVE INFORMATION RECORD

JANUARY 1991

AIRMAIL

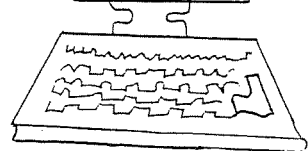
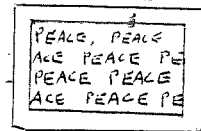
We are pleased that we continue to add to our list of subscribers. Please do inform anyone that you think might be interested in what we do. We have no shortage of material, and will include book reviews, interviews, in-depth guides to peace collections, and of course more selections for our popular "The Good, The Bad and The Idiotic," etc., etc., in future issues of AIR. Also, we would be pleased to include articles or snippets that YOU send us.

We have been mentioned recently in the "Library Association Record" and the "Assistant Librarian", after some energetic promotion. Correspondence since the last issue includes another letter from our friends in the Museum of Peace and Solidarity in Samarkand, USSR. They have been hosting guests from all over the world and have just had their first disarmament ceremony- exchanging war toys for peace ones. This issue of AIR contains more information on the idea of a British Peace Museum.

It has been suggested that a photograph or two would improve the quality of AIR. Any other suggestions? Of course, when we get a computer or two, we will be able to produce AIR with much greater ease and professionalism- we are still very much open to donations!

Our next issue (AIR 5) will be mainly devoted to libraries, librarians, and resources from abroad concerned with peace issues. This will also be our first 12 page issue!

One final point: anyone who wishes to reproduce anything written in AIR (except where specifically indicated) is welcome to do so.



All correspondence to AIR should be addressed to:

Librarians Within the Peace Movement, c/o 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1

EDITORIAL BOARD: Martyn Lowe, Helen Thomas, Declan McHugh

AIR Issue No. 4: Helen Thomas, Martyn Lowe, Declan McHugh: typing, design & production.

British Collections

PEACE MUSEUM FOR BRITAIN PROJECT

In AIR 2 (p.2) I suggested that Britain too should have a peace museum such as already exists in the USA, the USSR, and a few other countries. I am pleased to report now that the idea has been given a new lease of life. Michael Irwin, former UN Medical Director and now on the executive committee of the Medical Association for the Prevention of War (MAPW), whose article in the Sept. 1988 issue of the "Pacifist" partly prompted mine, proposed at the National Peace Council (NPC) AGM on 5th November that the NPC should consider the principle that a peace museum be established in London. The AGM endorsed the idea, recommending that MAPW approach appropriate bodies and individuals such as the Imperial War Museum and Tom Daffern, who is involved with the Institute for a School of Peace Studies at the University of London (IPSUL).

Michael believes that: "A British peace museum could become a permanent central record of the various organisations, as well as the many famed and unsung individuals, who have been involved in this country in presenting the case against war.

In a peace museum, there could be a permanent exhibition of photographs, posters, paintings, cartoons, books and journals, and the many badges and buttons which dramatically show the history of the anti-war movement in this country. Also in this museum there could be tapes of various peace songs, detailed profiles of some of the Nobel Peace Prize winners, and a special room for children where the emphasis would be on war toys and the better alternatives. Special exhibitions could be presented periodically, and perhaps these could be packed and displayed in other locations in the UK. A peace museum could become an active centre which could inspire one for the future while learning from past efforts to raise consciousness about the issues involved in promoting peace."

If you are interested in the idea, please write to Michael Irwin at: MAPW, 601 Holloway Road, London N19 4DJ- before the end of January 1991.

Incidentally, it is interesting to note that the Chicago Peace Museum, founded in 1981, now has five full-time and three part-time staff, as well as 150 volunteers, and in 1989 50,000 people visited it.

Declan McHugh



1992

The Northern Irish Conflict Archive, the single most important resource for the study of the Northern Ireland situation, began in 1968. Now it contains over 35,000 items covering all political viewpoints in the North. It is praised by people from the whole spectrum of those viewpoints and is regarded as invaluable by academics, authors, journalists and broadcasters who are interested in Northern Irish political history since 1968.

Now the materials are being progressively microfilmed and the microfiches offered for sale. It is hoped that this programme of microfilming will help the collection achieve its aim of becoming self-financing.

The Linen Hall materials range from leaflets and other ephemera to periodicals and books. Although the hard copy indexes which come with the microfiche do provide access to particular publishers, places of publication and items published in a particular year, there is no specific subject access. This is not surprising, given the size of the collection, but such subject access is obviously very important - there would appear to be a vital task outstanding, therefore, for one or more determined people.

For more information about the collection, contact the librarian, John Gray, at:

The Linen Hall Library, 17 Donegal Square, Belfast BT1 5GD
Tel. (0232) 321707
Fax (0232) 438586

Services

Media Transcription Service (MTS) is a non-profit making organisation, established in 1988, to monitor TV and radio broadcasts on defence, arms control, and related matters. Transcripts of programmes, which subscribers identify as of interest to them from index lists they are sent, can be obtained on paper or on computer disk for a fee. Organisations and individuals funded by charitable trusts are considered for discount.

Opinion and policy makers have praised the service, and it is one of which librarians and information workers interested in peace issues should be aware. Access to MTS transcripts is also possible via Green Net, the electronic network for peace and environmental activists, which I'll be writing about in more detail in a future issue of AIR.

I've used MTS myself at the National Peace Council and now at CND, and find it extremely useful, especially when it comes to keeping tabs on what politicians actually say about something. If you can afford it, it's an excellent source of defence-related information and a useful tool to underpin campaigning.

Contact MTS at:
P.O. Box 3, Newton Le Willows, Merseyside WA12 8QE
Tel. (0925) 22647

Declan McHugh

JEWISH LIBRARY VANDALISED

In Melbourne, Australia, neo-Nazis broke into a Jewish library and damaged 5,000 religious books with paint.

REVIEWS

Nagel, Charles R.

"Keyguide to Information Sources in Animal Rights"

Mansell/McFarlane, London, 1989. 0-7201-1984-7 £30 pp.279

This bibliography is one of the most detailed available dealing with the whole set of issues surrounding animal rights. It is in three parts. Part 1 is an overview of animal rights literature, subdivided into areas such as: "Philosophy and Animals," "Science and Medicine and Animals," "Law and Animals," "Vegetarianism and Animals," etc. Part 2 is an annotated bibliography arranged chronologically. Part 3 comprises both an A-Z international list and country-by-country listings. The Appendices include such things as audio-visual materials, journals, etc. The index to this work is very comprehensive. While at £30 this book might not be one that an individual could afford, it is a bibliography that many campaigning bodies should consider purchasing.

Martyn Lowe



Many pacifists view vegetarianism as a major part of the philosophy of non-violence. Indeed, both Tolstoy and Gandhi were vegetarians. London Vegans' new "Directory of Groups, Organisations, and Businesses," "Vege Pages", will therefore be of great use to many pacifists and non-violent activists. This directory contains 42 pages of contacts, campaigning bodies, ecology/environmental bodies, wholefood suppliers, vegan and vegetarian organisations, etc. Costing 75p (plus 25p p&p), the A4 format may not make for a glossy work, but in terms of information content, it is a far better work than many another work in the £5-£10 range.

Available from:

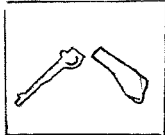
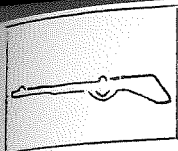
London Vegans, 7 Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middx. HA8 9BE

Martyn Lowe

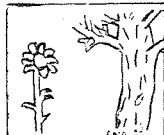
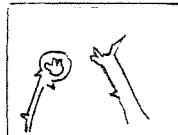
"Vege Tables" is another directory/guide produced by London Vegans. It is a "quick-comparison guide to vegetarian and part-vegetarian restaurants in and around London." The restaurants are listed in area order (e.g. Central London, North London (Inner), etc.), with an alphabetical listing at the end. I applaud the effort, price, and usefulness: a typical entry supplies information on type of food, price of average meals, opening hours, number of seats, as well as addresses, telephone numbers, nearest underground/BR station, etc. Being a vegan of some ten years' standing who knows quite a few of the restaurants, I did find a number of errors, but I know only too well that this is unavoidable in such a work, and "Vege Tables" is updated periodically. I do think a listing of all the vegetarian, vegan, omnivorous, Chinese, etc. restaurants at the back would have been a good idea.

"Vege Tables" is printed on A4 recycled paper and like its companion costs only 75p (plus p&p), from the address above.

Declan McHugh



WRI



December 1st is World Prisoners for Peace Day. Each year the War Resisters International (WRI) produces a "Prisoners for Peace" list. This year the list has been produced as a supplement within the December issue of Peace News (PN).

WRI is THE international pacifist body, founded in 1921, and has consultative status within the United Nations on the question of Conscientious Objection worldwide. It has various pacifist organisations as sections. Membership of WRI is based upon the pledge: "War is a crime against humanity. I am therefore determined not to support any kind of war and to strive for the removal of all causes of war."

Peace News was founded as a pacifist newspaper in 1936 and has been published in various formats ever since. Earlier this year PN joined with WRI to be published as a joint International Pacifist Newspaper, replacing the old WRI Newsletter.

For those interested in the history of PN, the following book may be of interest:

Beale, Albert. Against All War. Fifty years of Peace News 1936-1986
Peace News, London, June 1986. 0-946409-07-2

WRI files cover all aspects of the Conscientious Objection question. The files are organised both on a country-by-country and issue-by-issue basis. WRI receives several hundred pacifist and peace journals. The files are not available for general reference (although WRI staff can advise on CO issues), since WRI is a campaigning body and not a reference library.

For details about Peace News subscriptions, and the work of WRI, together with contact addresses for the local pacifist bodies open to you, contact:

War Resisters International/Peace News, 55 Dawes Street, London SE 17

Martyn Lowe

Resources

"Peace Information Resources: a guide to 32 British collections, with comprehensive subject index"; compiled by Declan McHugh
NPC, 1987, 83p

Although dating somewhat, this is still a useful guide to many of the most important national and local peace collections. Available for only £1 (inc. p&p) from the NPC at:
29 Great James Street, London WC1N 3ES. Tel. 071-242 3228

"The Pacific Region"
"Chemical Weapons"

Two twelve-page briefings giving introductions to the topics followed by listings of important organisations, books, periodicals, reports, videos, etc. Both are compiled by Declan McHugh and are available from the NPC at the above address for £1 each (inc. p&p).

(Declan would like to point out that he does not receive any money from sales of the above items, - that goes to the NPC. We would just like people to be aware of them, after taking the trouble to research and write them.)

Thought for the issue

"The more Communicated, more Abundant Grows"

Milton- "Paradise Lost"

Play Matters ☺

After our piece on toy libraries in AIR 2 (p.3) Play Matters, the National Toy Libraries Association, have sent us a copy of their journal "Ark" which features a letter about toys for peace. Apparently, in 1986, as part of the UN International Year of Peace, the Polish Peace Coalition established an international "Toys & games for peace" competition. Designs for co-operative games and peace toys are being sought for the next competition which will take place in 1991.

For more details, contact:

Joan Staines, Laurel Cottage, 106 High Street, Bathford, Bath BA1 7TH

Declan McHugh

THE GOOD, the BAD,

and THE IDIOT 

"Coron Wheeler was collecting five pence fines in the grim fluorescent silence of a south London library when her association with jazz began."

Melody Maker, 1 Sept., 1990

"At present the collection has to be housed in different locations and because librarians are, to a man and woman, of the type known to psychiatry as anal obsessives, they want everything neatly labelled and stored in one place."

A.N. Wilson on the new British Library, Evening Standard, 1 Nov., 1990

"The Minister for the Arts (David Mellor) was introduced by the Oxford Union Librarian Jonathan Catharill to the 200-strong audience as "the former Minister for Vivisection" ... it fell to former librarian Jacob Pears-Mogg to insist that Catharill withdrew his "very offensive comments"."

Evening Standard, 7 Nov., 1990

"It is well known that librarians hate readers: messy, troublesome people who actually want to see the books instead of leaving them neatly arranged in the stacks. If librarians had their way they would not allow any reader at all in their libraries."

More from the A.N. Wilson rant

For the fifty minutes of revelry that remained, Niki Landau threw his heart into the party. Sang and danced for a grim-faced Scottish librarian in pearls.

John le Carre. The Russia House, 1989